

VZCZCXRO2781
PP RUEHAO RUEHCD RUEHGA RUEHGD RUEHHA RUEHHO RUEHMC RUEHNG RUEHNL
RUEHQU RUEHRD RUEHRG RUEHRS RUEHTM RUEHVC
DE RUEHUB #8769/01 1141533
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 241533Z APR 06
FM USINT HAVANA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5884
INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 0073
RUCOWCV/CCGDSEVEN MIAMI FL
RUESDM/JTLO MIAMI FL
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUMIAAA/USCINCSO MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 HAVANA 008769

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/24/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [ECON](#) [CU](#)

SUBJECT: CASTRO'S YOUTHFUL RECRUITS WAGE WAR ON CORRUPTION

REF: A. HAVANA 8017

[1](#)B. 05 HAVANA 23177

Classified By: MICHAEL E. PARMLY FOR REASONS 1.4 b/d

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: One of Castro's top concerns this year is the battle against corruption. In a campaign that began five months ago, hundreds of youths have been recruited to fight corruption. End Summary.

Anti-Corruption: One of Castro's Top Three Pastimes

[1](#)2. (C) Castro has busied himself with three major campaigns this year: The "Energy Revolution" to end blackouts (ref A); the propaganda response to corruption. Of the three, the anti-corruption campaign has had the most tangible effects on the Cuban public.

[1](#)3. (C) Castro enlisted 20,000 "social workers" from Havana and the provinces to implement his anti-corruption campaign, initiated five months ago. The "social workers" followed by a murky operation called "The Rich Folks of Today" (ref B). While the general public has not been informed of Castro's efforts, the operation has been a success.

Gas Stations

[1](#)4. (C) In October, hundreds of youthful "social workers" were bussed to the capital and sent to take over the city's gas stations at 4:00 a.m.

[1](#)5. (C) The fate of the regular gas station employees is unknown, though they are among hundreds of state employees dismissed or transferred during the operation. A colonel and she has presumably benefited from his leverage. Other former attendants have probably been moved into less attractive jobs or military units.

[1](#)6. (C) The social workers say the four-month operation is finally coming to an end and they will be sent home May 1 "to await the next mission." The operation has been a success.

Ports

[1](#)7. (C) Another major but more obscure operation has been the military takeover of the ports between October and November of 2005. A general was sent to Havana to oversee the operation. The operation has been a success. HAVANA 00008769 002 OF 003

(a rare reversal of the usual dynamic). The inspector reportedly complained, however, that the port takeover had deprived him of his usual means of income.

Markets, Bakeries

[1](#)8. (C) In addition to these more deliberate efforts, the GOC has increased "hit-and-run" raids on state operations. Farmer's markets have been raided, and the operation has been a success.

Hotels, Private Restaurants, State Farms

[1](#)9. (C) Dutch consultant Genevieve van der Vlugt told P/E Officer that social workers had replaced general managers at every hotel in Old Havana. The operation has been a success. (Not only are Cubans prohibited from buying cell phones, but hotel employees living righteously off their state salary should not be allowed to do so.)

[1](#)10. (C) Another foreigner commented to P/E Officer that social workers had been taking over the accounting of "all major industries" (not just the oil industry).

[1](#)11. (C) Finally, Havana paladars (private restaurants) were subject to raids by inspectors in November. Some observers predicted a general shutdown of the private sector.

The Brawn Behind the Operation

[1](#)12. (C) Castro's social workers are not trained professionals, but rather youth who are not otherwise occupied with school or jobs (i.e., dropouts). They are paid 300 pesos a month (12 USD), exceeding her husband's military pension. (Note: the sum is a pittance, but still considered a decent salary for a dropout.)

[1](#)13. (C) The social workers' youth and inexperience is painfully obvious to all who interact with them, and Castro has since buttressed his operation with more experienced youth.

[1](#)14. (C) Juxtaposing youth with age, Raul Castro recently introduced "Duos" into the anti-corruption mix (two-person teams of several thousand youths and older workers). The operation has been a success. HAVANA 00008769 003 OF 003
irony), "How can you explain this?"

Comment

[1](#)15. (C) The anti-corruption campaign is geared to end pilferage from top to bottom, but the incorporation of Cuban youth also implies social engineering.

[1](#)16. (C) Castro has given fewer public speeches of late, and has not touched on the issue of corruption for several months. But the ubiquitous presence of the anti-corruption campaign against "U.S. terrorism," in corruption Castro faces a real enemy.

PARMLY